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For immediate Release:

Miami Correctional Facility has successful ACA Reaccreditation Audit

Bunker Hill, IN (March 8, 2010) – The Miami Correctional Facility (MCF) received high praises recently after passing its second Reaccreditation Audit by the American Correctional Association (ACA).

The audit team spent 2½ days at the correctional facility touring the grounds and going through policies, procedures and practices. The audit team, which consisted of three members, is responsible for making sure MCF is following the standards of the ACA in order to continue receiving its recognition as an accredited facility.

The team, who have numerous years in their state's Department of Correction, consisted of Gail Zeek, who retired from the New York Department of Corrections having worked in personnel, training and accreditation; Robert Whidden, who worked as a warden and in operations in the Florida Department of Corrections.; and Hugh Daley, who worked as a chaplain and in the medical area for the Ohio Department of Correction.

Auditor Zeek said the facility had 449 non-mandatory standards it had to pass. The facility passed these standards with a 98.2 percent rating. And there were 59 mandatory standards that it passed by 100 percent.

"I congratulate you on an excellent audit," Auditor Daley said at the exit interview with staff. "You have done an exceptional job. It is a pleasure; it is indeed an honor for someone such as myself to come into an operation that you have here that demonstrates a proficiency and professionalism, that those who are outside the gates do not understand."

"If this was easy, then everyone would be accredited which is not always the case," Daley said of passing the audit. "What you have done can be summed up very simply by a quote from scripture, 'Well done, good and faithful servants.'"

While the auditors didn't award reaccreditation to the facility, they will be recommending it to the accreditation committee. The actual Reaccreditation will be awarded by the ACA board in Chicago sometime this summer. "There is no doubt in my mind that you are going to be reaccredited," Zeek said.

Miami Correctional Facility was first accredited in 2004. With this accreditation comes the responsibility of meeting the standards and passing a reaccreditation audit every three years. The facility passed its last Reaccreditation in 2007.

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Zeek noted “This facility does in fact treat accreditation as a process. It is quite easy for us, after a day or so, to find out this is how you operate on an ongoing basis or this is how you’re operating for 3 or 4 days while the audit team is here. It’s quite obvious that this one is operating on an ongoing basis. You’ve got a good facility here, you should be proud of it.”

Auditor Whidden agreed with Zeek. “You all put in a lot of work to get ready for this audit. The place was clean, standing tall and shiny.”

One of the things auditors do while touring the facility is to ask questions of staff and offenders. Questions to staff are about their knowledge of their jobs and the post orders. And with offenders the questions are about consistency and checking to see if they feel safe. “I talked to a lot of the inmates as I go around. There were no adverse comments from any of them. I asked if they were safe. That’s a big issue from a security standpoint. I was surprised with a maximum unit this big, that nobody said they felt unsafe here. People leave you alone to do your time. (This means) Somebody’s paying attention and doing their jobs,” Whidden said.

As for staff, Whidden said they know their jobs. “People know their jobs here. They are well-versed on them. They knew the answers (to my questions) which probably speak to your training department as well. Everybody’s knowledgeable of their assignments.”

“My overall impression of the facility is that it’s an excellent managed and run facility. You’ve got control here, the discipline is good, staff are dedicated to the department,” Whidden said. “The highest compliment I can tell you is (when asked the question) ‘would I work here?’ I would say ‘yes’ I would work here.”

According to Indiana Department of Correction Commissioner Edwin G. Buss who attended the closing celebration, “(MCF) is a finely run facility. There are more facility’s that are not accredited in this country by the ACA than are. This is a tremendous accomplishment.”

Commissioner Buss also complimented the facility’s ACA Accreditation Coordinator Traci Riggle on her hard work and presented her with a Coin of Excellence.

“I can’t say enough about the tremendous work the folks at Miami Correctional Facility do, not only in the past three days of the audit, but every day. For a facility this large we just don’t have a lot of problems, but we have had a lot of accomplishments. There’s not a lot of negative that comes out of this facility. There’s only good news that comes out of MCF; and given the nature of our business, that’s not easy to do for a facility this size.”

Superintendent Mark R. Sevier said he was very proud of his facility. “I’m very privileged to represent this facility as its superintendent. The employees here worked hard and work hard every day to meet an outstanding level of professionalism and to comply with ACA’s standards. They prove every day that we are one of the best facility’s in the state and in the country.”

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About Miami Correctional Facility

The facility is located in North Central Indiana in Miami County near Bunker Hill, Ind., on 206 acres of the former Grissom Air Force Base. The High Medium/Maximum Security, all male facility began operations in August of 1999. Miami is the second largest facility in the state of Indiana with a 3,188-bed capacity and

employs more than 550 people from the area. Miami also operates a Level one – Minimum Security – facility which has 204 beds (This number is included in the 3,188). This unit opened in May 1999.

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